

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

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September 27, 2016


The Honorable Thomas Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

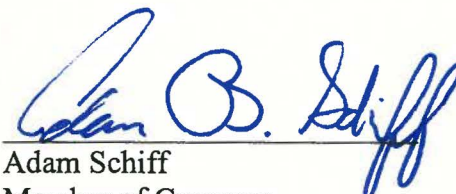
Dear Chairman Wheeler:

We are writing to urge you to continue to advance efforts that support independent, women- and minority-owned cable channels. For 25 years, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has fostered a competitive video distribution landscape that promotes diversity of media voices. However, in that timeframe the video distribution marketplace has undergone significant change that has impacted Multichannel Video Program Distributors (MVPDs). In a rapidly changing media landscape, we must ensure that diverse voices are available to consumers, a significant public policy objective.

We commend the FCC for its recent Notice of Inquiry (NOI) on the Availability of Diverse and Independent Sources of Video Programming and for shedding light on some of the obstacles facing independent, women, and minority owned cable channels. The information collected as a result of the NOI should assist in both identifying and addressing the obstacles faced by independent, women, and minority owned cable channels in the current media market. Upon completion of the NOI, the FCC should consider next steps to address any obstacles, including consideration of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on the issues identified. In the interim, we applaud the FCC for its inquiry into this important issue and urge you to continue to prioritize the inclusion of diverse voices in the television landscape. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,


Karen Bass
Member of Congress


Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



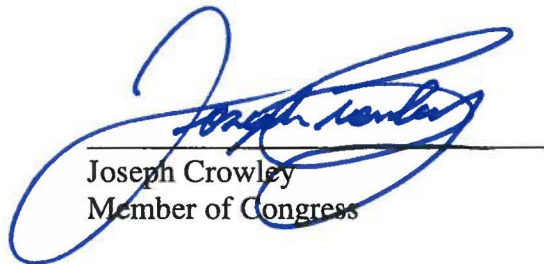
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



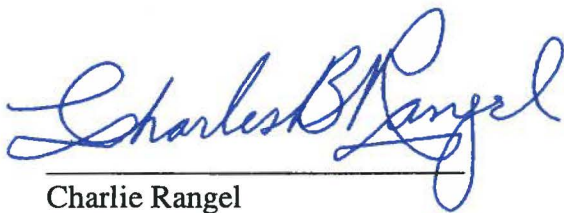
Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Ted Lieu
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



Charlie Rangel
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 26, 2016

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rangel:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's recent actions to foster consumer choice and access to diverse programming on television, including independent, minority, and women-owned programming.

As you know, on September 29, 2016, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) as a result of the public input received in response to the Notice of Inquiry adopted earlier this year on the state of diversity in the video programming market. The NPRM proposes rules that would prohibit the use of certain clauses in pay-TV programming distribution contracts that impede carriage of independent and diverse programming. The proposed rules would help remove these barriers to competition, diversity, and innovation in the video marketplace, giving independent and niche programmers greater ability to reach their intended audiences. The proposed rules potentially could provide consumers with more choice in the sources and variety of their video programming, greater flexibility in how they access program content, and lower prices for their video programming services. Once the comment period has ended, Commission staff will review the full record and make recommendations on the next steps in this proceeding.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 26, 2016

The Honorable Ted Lieu
U.S. House of Representatives
415 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lieu:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's recent actions to foster consumer choice and access to diverse programming on television, including independent, minority, and women-owned programming.

As you know, on September 29, 2016, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) as a result of the public input received in response to the Notice of Inquiry adopted earlier this year on the state of diversity in the video programming market. The NPRM proposes rules that would prohibit the use of certain clauses in pay-TV programming distribution contracts that impede carriage of independent and diverse programming. The proposed rules would help remove these barriers to competition, diversity, and innovation in the video marketplace, giving independent and niche programmers greater ability to reach their intended audiences. The proposed rules potentially could provide consumers with more choice in the sources and variety of their video programming, greater flexibility in how they access program content, and lower prices for their video programming services. Once the comment period has ended, Commission staff will review the full record and make recommendations on the next steps in this proceeding.

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 26, 2016

The Honorable Barbara Lee
U.S. House of Representatives
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Lee:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's recent actions to foster consumer choice and access to diverse programming on television, including independent, minority, and women-owned programming.

As you know, on September 29, 2016, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) as a result of the public input received in response to the Notice of Inquiry adopted earlier this year on the state of diversity in the video programming market. The NPRM proposes rules that would prohibit the use of certain clauses in pay-TV programming distribution contracts that impede carriage of independent and diverse programming. The proposed rules would help remove these barriers to competition, diversity, and innovation in the video marketplace, giving independent and niche programmers greater ability to reach their intended audiences. The proposed rules potentially could provide consumers with more choice in the sources and variety of their video programming, greater flexibility in how they access program content, and lower prices for their video programming services. Once the comment period has ended, Commission staff will review the full record and make recommendations on the next steps in this proceeding.

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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 26, 2016

The Honorable Ted Deutch
U.S. House of Representatives
2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Deutch:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's recent actions to foster consumer choice and access to diverse programming on television, including independent, minority, and women-owned programming.

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 26, 2016

The Honorable Joseph Crowley
U.S. House of Representatives
1436 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Crowley:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's recent actions to foster consumer choice and access to diverse programming on television, including independent, minority, and women-owned programming.

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 26, 2016

The Honorable Karen Bass
U.S. House of Representatives
408 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Bass:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's recent actions to foster consumer choice and access to diverse programming on television, including independent, minority, and women-owned programming.

As you know, on September 29, 2016, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) as a result of the public input received in response to the Notice of Inquiry adopted earlier this year on the state of diversity in the video programming market. The NPRM proposes rules that would prohibit the use of certain clauses in pay-TV programming distribution contracts that impede carriage of independent and diverse programming. The proposed rules would help remove these barriers to competition, diversity, and innovation in the video marketplace, giving independent and niche programmers greater ability to reach their intended audiences. The proposed rules potentially could provide consumers with more choice in the sources and variety of their video programming, greater flexibility in how they access program content, and lower prices for their video programming services. Once the comment period has ended, Commission staff will review the full record and make recommendations on the next steps in this proceeding.

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Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

October 26, 2016

The Honorable Adam B. Schiff
U.S. House of Representatives
2411 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Schiff:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's recent actions to foster consumer choice and access to diverse programming on television, including independent, minority, and women-owned programming.

As you know, on September 29, 2016, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) as a result of the public input received in response to the Notice of Inquiry adopted earlier this year on the state of diversity in the video programming market. The NPRM proposes rules that would prohibit the use of certain clauses in pay-TV programming distribution contracts that impede carriage of independent and diverse programming. The proposed rules would help remove these barriers to competition, diversity, and innovation in the video marketplace, giving independent and niche programmers greater ability to reach their intended audiences. The proposed rules potentially could provide consumers with more choice in the sources and variety of their video programming, greater flexibility in how they access program content, and lower prices for their video programming services. Once the comment period has ended, Commission staff will review the full record and make recommendations on the next steps in this proceeding.

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Tom Wheeler